

3 Development Strategy

This chapter was amended as part of Official Plan Amendments #76 and #79 as part of a 5-year review of the Official Plan. Official Plan Amendment #76 was approved by the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing on 01/06/2012. Official Plan Amendment #79 was approved by the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing on 06/05/2012.

3.0 Preamble

*PLANNING FOR
THE 21ST
CENTURY*

As we enter the second decade of the 21st Century, Windsor has reconfirmed its strategic directions for the future as set out in its Community Strategic Plan, Official Plan and various master plan documents. These initiatives reflect community values to keep Windsor healthy, caring and prosperous. The planning directions for Windsor are expressed in this Official Plan through a development strategy that consists of three main parts:

- (a) A Vision statement that clearly expresses what Windsor wants to become and is the foundation for all municipal decisions which will guide the planning of the community's future;
- (b) The Principles which, as philosophical statements and values supporting the vision, establish the qualitative framework for land use planning decisions;
- (c) The **Growth Concept** that embodies the Vision of the Community Strategic Plan.

3.1 Vision

The planning of Windsor's future is guided by the following vision taken from Dream Dare Do – The City of Windsor Community Strategic Plan:

VISION

“Windsor is a quality city full of history and potential, with a diverse culture, a durable economy, and a healthy environment where citizens share a strong sense of belonging and a collective pride of place.”

The Community Strategic Plan also provides the following mission statement for achieving the vision:

*MISSION
STATEMENT*

“Our City is built on relationships – between our citizens and their government, businesses and public institutions, city and region – all interconnected, mutually supportive, and focused on the brightest future we can create together.”

**FOUR
INTERRELATED
THEMES**

The Community’s commitment to the vision is reflected in an action strategy centred around four interrelated pillars, namely:

- (a) Our Economy: Cultivated and Competitive;
- (b) Our Society: Diverse and Caring;
- (c) Our Environment: Clean & Efficient; and
- (d) Our Government: Responsive & Responsible.



3.2 Growth Concept

The 1996 Census population of Windsor was 197,695. Windsor’s population is expected to increase by between 11,980 to 23,280 from 1996 to 2016. This growth and corresponding demographic changes, is projected to result in the need for an additional 10,950 dwelling units and create between 13,900 and 29,600 new jobs. This, in turn, will result in the projected development of between 390 to 476 hectares of residential lands and 243 to 514 hectares of employment and commercial lands.

The policies of this Plan are directed toward accommodating the projected growth through practical and efficient land use management strategies that promote a compact pattern of development and balanced transportation system. Compatible residential, commercial and employment growth will be directed to appropriate locations within existing and planned neighbourhoods to reduce development and infrastructure costs and provide opportunities to live, work and shop in

close proximity. Mixed use developments will be encouraged with strong pedestrian orientations and to support public transit. This concept will enable Windsor to continue its growth and foster a vibrant economy, while ensuring a safe, caring and diverse community and a sustainable, healthy environment.

In order to manage growth consistent with the community vision, the following key policy directions are provided for in the other chapters of this Plan.

3.2.1 Safe, Caring and Diverse Community

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| <i>NEIGHBOURHOOD CENTRES</i> | 3.2.1.1 | Windsorites want to be a part of neighbourhoods that meet their needs as places to live, shop and play. Each neighbourhood will have a central area that provides a focus for activities and is within a convenient walking distance. Here, people will find shops, jobs, neighbourhood based services, public places that are safe and inviting, and a place to meet with neighbours and join in community life. The neighbourhood centre will provide a variety of housing types for all ages and incomes. |
| <i>NEIGHBOURHOOD HOUSING VARIETY</i> | 3.2.1.2 | Encouraging a range of housing types will ensure that people have an opportunity to live in their neighbourhoods as they pass through the various stages of their lives. Residents will have a voice in how this new housing fits within their neighbourhood. As the city grows, more housing opportunities will mean less sprawl onto agricultural and natural lands. |
| <i>DISTINCTIVE NEIGHBOURHOOD CHARACTER</i> | 3.2.1.3 | Windsor will keep much of what gives its existing neighbourhoods their character – trees and greenery, heritage structures and spaces, distinctive area identities, parks, and generally low profile development outside the City Centre. Around the neighbourhood centres, the existing character of the neighbourhood will be retained and enhanced. Newly developing areas will be planned to foster their own unique neighbourhood identities with a mixture of homes, amenities and services. |
| <i>COMMUNITY DESIGN</i> | 3.2.1.4 | The design of buildings and spaces will respect and enhance the character of their surroundings, incorporating natural features and creating interesting and comfortable places. Streets, open spaces and the greenway system will serve as public amenities connecting and defining neighbourhoods and contributing to Windsor’s image. New development in Windsor will accommodate the needs of pedestrians, cyclists and other recreational activities. |

3.3.2 Vibrant Economy

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| <i>EMPLOYMENT</i> | 3.2.2.1 | Windsor’s economy will be stimulated by active employment centres that |
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<i>CENTRES</i>		serve the larger Census Metropolitan Area. These centres will cluster appropriate large scale employment, shopping and entertainment uses together to create exciting areas for employment and investment. With convenient access to major transportation routes, these centres will be transit friendly and poised to take advantage of Windsor's role as an international gateway.
<i>CITY CENTRE</i>	3.2.2.2	The City Centre will continue to be the major focus of cultural, social and economic activities. The City Centre is and will remain the heart of Windsor, serving as the visual symbol of the entire community. A diverse mixture of businesses, cultural venues, major government offices and entertainment destinations will strengthen downtown as a major economic centre. The heart of our community will also provide a liveable residential environment for a variety of people and be a welcoming arrival point for visitors.
<i>COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENT</i>	3.2.2.3	Revitalizing areas in need of improvement will improve Windsor, while protecting the community's investment in infrastructure and other services. Community improvement initiatives will strengthen neighbourhoods by providing new businesses, homes and public spaces and by creating unique opportunities for reinvestment in the community.
	3.2.3	Sustainable, Healthy Environment
<i>TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM</i>	3.2.3.1	Windsor will work toward achieving a sustainable transportation system where all modes of transportation can play a more balanced role. The creation of mixed use and employment centres will allow businesses and services to be closer to homes and allow greater opportunities for walking, cycling and transit.
<i>WATERFRONT</i>	3.2.3.2	The Detroit River and Lake St. Clair waterfront will continue to be cherished as a community asset. A mixture of open spaces, residences and businesses will continue to provide the waterfront with its character and support a healthy environment, economic growth and the community's desire for public access to the water's edge.
<i>THE GREENWAY SYSTEM</i>	3.2.3.3	The Greenway System will connect Windsor's neighbourhoods, parks, natural areas and the waterfront. The system will foster recreational activities, contribute to community health, enhance the natural environment and link Windsor to its neighbouring municipalities.
<i>HEALTHY ECOSYSTEM</i>	3.2.3.4	Windsor will achieve greater harmony between human activities and natural systems. Attention will be given to establishing a flourishing natural environment, with clean air, land and water.

ENERGY EFFICIENCY 3.2.3.5 Windsor will encourage the design and construction of energy efficient buildings and landscapes to reduce air, water and land pollution and environmental impacts of energy production and consumption.

3.2.4 Responsive, Effective Local Government

COMMUNITY BASED PLANNING 3.2.4.1 People will be involved in the municipal processes that shape Windsor and its neighbourhoods. Residents will be encouraged to work with municipal staff to identify and resolve city-wide and neighbourhood issues. New ways will be found to build consensus within the community to ensure that Windsor advances toward its desired future.

SERVICE DELIVERY 3.2.4.2 Windsorites want a planning process that is responsive, effective and fiscally responsible. Planning services will be efficiently delivered and carefully targeted to achieve the community vision.

3.3 Urban Structure Plan

The Urban Structure Plan identifies the key structural elements within the municipality. These key structural elements and the linkages between these elements establish the strategic framework within which more detailed land use designations can be established.

3.3.1 Nodes

Nodes in this context are existing or future locations of concentrated activity on the Urban Structure Plan that serve the societal, environmental and economic needs at a neighbourhood and/or regional scale. The most successful nodes are the ones that exhibit a wide variety of land uses, including higher density residential and employment uses, and have access to frequent public transit service. Smaller scale community and neighbourhood nodes play an important role in providing services to the surrounding neighbourhoods, providing a range of housing opportunities and, providing a recognized sense of place for these neighbourhoods.

GROWTH CENTRES 3.3.1.1 Growth Centres are the highest in the hierarchy of nodes in Windsor due to their scale, density, range of uses, function and current or future identity. Growth Centres should be planned:

- (a) To serve as focal areas for investment in institutional and region-wide public services, as well as commercial, recreational, cultural and entertainment uses;
- (b) To accommodate and support major transit infrastructure;
- (c) To serve as high density major employment centres;
- (d) To accommodate a significant share of households and employment growth; and,

- (e) To accommodate a minimum density of 200 residents and 200 jobs per net hectare;

The minimum density for new residential-only development is 80 units per net hectare.

*MAJOR
ACTIVITY
CENTRES*

3.3.1.2 Major Activity Centres are second in the hierarchy of nodes in Windsor. The following comprise Windsor's Major Activity Centres:

- (a) Regional Commercial Centres;
- (b) Regional Institutional Centres;
- (c) Regional Employment Centres; and
- (d) Regional Open Space System.

These types of nodes are considered to be sub-regional in the context of Windsor and were originally planned as single-use facilities that have evolved into multi-use urban areas with a variety of densities. Typically, these nodes are currently or have the potential to be important destinations within the regional public transit network. Future residential development and redevelopment at Major Activity Centres should be medium (30 units per net hectare) to high-density (80+ units per net hectare). Residential intensification is desired at or near Major Activity Centres. Development surrounding these locations will be subject to the preparation of a Secondary Plan or plan of subdivision.

(a) Regional Commercial Centres

Regional Commercial Centres are a type of Major Activity Centre where commercial services are provided to residents across the city and region. This type of node also provides the location for serving the daily and weekly shopping needs of residents living within or near the node. Regional Commercial Centres may also function as employment centres providing population serving offices, retail, personal services and local institutions.

In the future these nodes should function as vibrant mixed-use commercial-residential neighbourhoods serving a higher density of population. Ideally, the predominant form of new or redeveloped housing should be medium and high-density residential buildings with ground floor and possibly second floor commercial uses and upper floor residential dwellings.

(b) Regional Institutional Centres

Regional Institutional Centres are a type of Major Activity Centre where institutional services are provided to residents across the

city and region. This type of node typically serves as a location for the provision of hospital-based health care and/or major post-secondary institutions. Regional Institutional Centres can also function as employment centres providing jobs in the health care, education, research and development, offices, retail and personal service sectors.

(c) Regional Employment Centres

Regional Employment Centres are a type of Major Activity Centre where a large number of jobs are located. This type of node typically serves as a location for the large scale manufacturing or distribution of goods. Additionally, retail, office and personal service uses may be established as ancillary uses.

(d) Regional Open Space System

The Regional Open Space System includes the major natural and open space features that form part of a continuous system throughout Windsor. Some components of the Regional Open Space System are also designated as Natural Heritage in the Official Plan although not all Natural Heritage features are components of the Regional Open Space System. The Regional Open Space System includes an existing and future natural and naturalized corridor around Windsor with opportunities for future recreation and recreational pathways.

3.3.2 Corridors

Corridors represent the backbones of the urban network structure. Neighbourhoods gravitate towards these corridors to serve their everyday needs or to connect with larger nodes, commercial centres and employment centres to access a wider range of services and opportunities. Corridors have opportunities for intensification that would provide a wider range of services and opportunities for adjacent neighbourhoods but also more opportunities to live and work in the area. Corridors may connect with nodes and extend along roadways radiating away from a central point. Some corridors exist without such connections and represent stand alone sections.

Corridors are located along transit routes, with City Corridors having the most frequent service. Ideally, corridors are walkable, providing neighbourhoods and those who use transit with easy access to services along main streets. Corridors provide residents with opportunities to travel by bus, bicycle or on foot to their desired destination within or

beyond their neighbourhood. Increased employment and residential densities along corridors support more frequent transit, and in turn more frequent transit supports and attracts higher density land uses along the corridor. This symbiotic relationship between transit, pedestrians and corridor intensification is key to the success of any corridor. Thus, corridors and transit should be planned and fostered together.

*CITY
CORRIDORS*

3.3.2.1 City Corridors serve to connect the City Centre Growth Centre and Regional Commercial Centres. City corridors radiate from these Centres following numerous high frequency transit corridors. City corridors connect to Regional Commercial Centres along selected arterial roads but do not extend as far outward or as numerous as corridors connected to the City Centre. These corridors are intended to provide services for those living in close proximity to the area but also those who may arrive by transit, bicycle and by car.

There are higher density employment and residential opportunities, with a significant amount of retail to support both every day needs, but also needs beyond the day such as furniture and appliance stores, home improvement stores, and stores that carry specialty items.

Pharmacies and medical service are available with multiple choices for specialized care including doctors who specialize in specific types of care.

Government services and buildings associated with the municipality, province or federal government are also found in these areas.

Entertainment facilities, designed to attract people from well beyond the immediate area are also found on corridors that radiate from the City Centre.

Transit service is frequent (10-20 minute peak headways) and offers multiple connections to other nodes and corridors throughout the city by a main transfer location or transit station. Regional transit connections are also available.

Residential development may include high profile (26 to 58 metres in height), medium profile (14 to 26 metres in height) and residential over retail at street, as well as row housing and lofts.

*NEIGHBOURHOOD
CORRIDORS*

3.3.2.2 The purpose and function of neighbourhood corridors is to link street sections to neighbourhood nodes or as standalone sections of community retail and services. These corridors provide for the day to day needs of the immediate neighbourhood that surrounds them. While employment is not the major focus, these corridors create a sense of community by

providing places for residents to walk such as local retail businesses and services. Local services may also include pharmacies, convenience stores and retail to serve the day to day needs of residents.

Transit service is available and multiple routes may converge within the corridor and provide a few connections to other corridors and to Regional Commercial Centres.

3.3.3 Neighbourhoods

Neighbourhoods are the most basic component of Windsor's urban structure and occupy the greatest proportion of the City. Neighbourhoods are stable, low-to-medium-density residential areas and are comprised of local streets, parks, open spaces, schools, minor institutions and neighbourhood and convenience scale retail services.

The three dominant types of dwellings in Windsor's neighbourhoods are single detached, semi-detached and townhouses. The density range for Windsor's neighbourhoods is between 20 to 35 units per net hectare. This density range provides for low and some medium-density intensification to occur in existing neighbourhoods. Multiple dwelling buildings with medium and high-densities are encouraged at nodes identified in the Urban Structure Plan.

3.3.4 Structural Elements in Neighbouring Communities

Several urban structural elements are included for the neighbouring communities of Detroit, Michigan, United States of America; and the towns of Tecumseh and LaSalle in Essex County, Ontario. These communities are beyond Windsor Council's jurisdiction and the structural elements are included on Official Plan Volume I – Schedule 'J' for reference purposes only.